

# INTERROGATION DAYS

RM Haines

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m a l l  
p r e s s

*Interrogation Days (complete edition)*  
2024 by RM Haines

This edition was prepared May 2025. It differs in small ways from the version released in October 2024.

50% of earnings from this booklet will be donated to mutual aid, anti-carceral, and social justice organizations. More information can be found at [deadmallpress.com](http://deadmallpress.com).

Materials & Tools: 20 lb paper for inner pages; 24 lb paper for black end pages; 65 lb cardstock for cover; staples, stapler, bone folder, scoring tools, cutting tools, corner rounder, laser printer, MS Word.

Fonts include Old Newspaper Type, 1942 Report, and Bembo Std.

Printer at home on a laser printer and assembled by hand.

# INTERROGATION DAYS

(complete edition)

by

R.M. Haines



## PREFACE TO THIS EDITION

*Interrogation Days* began as a single collection of poetry of approximately fifty pages. But like the poems it contains, that collection ended up appearing in a fragmented form, divided into multiple small booklets. Ultimately, the entire project has been one of shards: it tells about them, is composed of them, and was published in a way resembling them.

In 2022, I split the original text mentioned above into three different booklets, which I released via Dead Mall Press. The first two, *Civil Society* and *Dysnomia*, appeared that spring as micro-chapbooks; the remaining poems appeared as *Interrogation Days* later that fall. I had reasons for doing it this way, but later I started to rethink those. For a while in 2023, I began to group them on the DMP site as a “trilogy;” later, I put *Dysnomia* and *Civil Society* together into one volume and subtitled it “*Interrogation Days*, vol. 2”. Although I wanted to reissue them in one volume, I was not yet sure how to physically make a book with that many pages. On top of all this, I was still returning to outtake poems from the project, and I kept drafting new material that seemed to fit in too. (I also made some substantial changes to the poem “In a Time of Error.”) In 2024, I found a good way to make a book that would hold all the poems, and I resolved to do this “complete” edition to bring closure to the project.

In a sense, the book is a poetic dossier or compendium rather than a typical “full-length collection” with the expected progression. It is quite dense, and not necessarily something to read in one sitting, but I have given thought to the sequencing, which is roughly chronological: it moves through the opening decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, from 9/11 to the genocide in Gaza, following various echoes and continuities in between. I’ve split it into four sections, with the fourth section consisting of new material (i.e. not previously appearing via Dead Mall).

One other change in this edition is that I’ve made more overt attributions for the numerous quoted passages and references in the book. I’d already done much of this in earlier versions, but there is now a bit more info to be found in the end notes that may be clarifying. Nevertheless, a certain amount of ambiguity is built in, and I don’t want it to go away.

Beyond this, I think the poems mostly speak for themselves. At the very least, I hope anybody who reads them recognizes an honest attempt to say something about the psychic intensity of these years: the impact of images, icons, persons, events, weapons, technologies, atmospheres, and narratives, both falsified and true. It is a grim picture. But I hold out hope that, even in nightmare, the imagining heart still functions as a recorder and a compass. It keeps track through fear and confusion when the mind gets lost.

RM Haines

August 2024



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This book is dedicated to all those who have been killed,  
maimed, imprisoned, surveilled, defrauded, dehumanized,  
grief stricken, traumatized, and otherwise driven mad  
by the United States' pursuit of empire.



book I



## DRONE

The root of *drone* is burden. A drone  
burdens the music, insisting, calling

the ear to its pulse. On the *rubab*,  
the sympathetic strings are not struck.

Tuned to a certain pitch, each draws  
vibrations from the air. As mirror-tone,

as aura, the drone is the melody's  
other body: its root in the surround.

\*

A woman sings a tiny melody  
to the bees in their hive. She tells

of a death in the family, of a sorrow  
swelling within the house. Whispers,

sweet syllables. Once, this ritual  
of telling the bees kept alive

a sympathy between the humans  
and the colony dreaming its honey.

\*

The drone glides its way outward.  
Its eye scans a world of forms,

their texture, wavelength, radiance.  
It goes wherever. There are no

borders for a drone. Attuned,  
piloted by a strange intelligence,

it knows which sites to light upon—  
which dust should be pursued.

\*

In Kristeva's work, the *chora*  
surrounds the infant's untuned body.

Signs swim across its face, its fingers,  
writing a noise that can't be read.

Then the mother's touch teaches her child  
how to be inside itself, how to make

sense within its skin. The noise lives on  
as a trace: a body of remainders.

\*

In a cell, tying you to the plastic chair,  
a torturer reveals to you your body

as a place, a site whose boundaries  
are destroyed. Now, like him, you

want something: yourself. Humming,  
babbling lyrics to American melodies,

the torturer tells you he is sympathetic,  
he truly is, but you better learn how to talk.

\*

The sympathetic strings are not struck.  
In a cell, tied to the plastic chair,

a woman sings a tiny melody.  
Signs swim across a face, fingers,

in a colony dreaming its honey.  
The drone glides its way outward.

A mother's touch teaches her child  
its other body: its root in the surround.





# DEATH PRIME

## (or, Terror Management Theory)

In the experiment, subjects were primed, unconsciously, to think of death. (Elsewhere, Obama:

“I wanted somehow to save them.”) Their psyches caught on symbols of immortality: a flag, a cross. Then

they were asked to play judge, giving sentences. (Writes: “I ended up killing them instead.”) Primed this way,

*(my face is a hood, flies crawl across my eyes)*  
each one became more willing to punish.

\*

(The message cuts off.) For this world’s children,  
a siren is normal. Normal is learning to hide

beneath one’s desk, dreaming annihilation.  
That night, while our rockets launched on screen,

the disgraced anchor quoted poetry. *Beauty*  
is a word we still use. *Forever* is a word we use.

In the analyst’s textbook, we read, “Never believe  
in symmetry. Never go looking for a pattern.”

\*

In our name: the Mother of All Bombs.  
Night-vision green shows the birth: ~~nothing~~.

Explain: “What I’m going to do to you  
is going to be fucking disgusting.” Explain:

“BRING BACK THE DEATH PENALTY!  
BRING BACK OUR POLICE!” Any person,

reminded they will die, resists the intelligence.  
(The patient repeatedly collapsed.) On screen,

\*

the candidate goes off script. This is “greatness,”  
this is “humiliation.” Then the homework is due.

We read *The Denial of Death* on Kindle. “Sure,  
but what is your body count?” asks the executive.

(*Nation* is a word we still use). Elsewhere,  
in a dream, Robert Oppenheimer is only a boy

sitting at the table. He watches his mother’s  
gloved, prosthetic hand. Then he lifts the knife.

## REPRODUCTIONS

One scene bleeds into another. A cheap flyer  
shows Saddam's face pasted over a portrait

of Nebuchadnezzar. One Bush leads to the next.  
On the IMAX at the Air Force Base Museum,

a student watches soldiers fight oil fires in Kuwait.  
Camels, a black horizon. A failed report for History.

\*

Twin wars. Copies of copies, drones and suns.  
"After all, this is the guy who tried to kill my dad."

(Tongues cut out, etc.) When Saddam wrote poems  
for his interrogator, a young Arab-American man,

he loved him as an image of himself: a son.  
(On camera, a noose. The Festival of Sacrifice.)

\*

In an early self-portrait, W is facing away.  
We see his eyes in a small shaving mirror.

"I find it relaxing," he says before the camera.  
(Ads for pharmaceuticals, a first-person shooter.)

Later, he painted veterans maimed in his war.  
The truth only showed up by accident. A gaff.

\*

An empire goes insane inside the mirror.  
Selfies in the Green Zone. Handshakes, an alias.

On the desk of Provisional Authority, a placard reads,  
"Success Has a Thousand Fathers." Dull photos

taped to the locker. A desert bus carrying flypaper,  
soldiers, DVDs. A portrait of the western mind.

# PARALLAX

reading the CIA's *The Psychology of Intelligence Analysis*

1.

Once in a life time. Bird in the hand. Why can't we see what is there to be seen? A sketch of Reagan's face morphs into an odalisque. Evidence. Country. Issue. In this illusion, the old woman's nose, mouth, and eye are, respectively, the young woman's chin, necklace, and ear. Because of limits in the human mental capacity, the mind cannot cope directly with the complexity of the world. The Magic Number Seven (Plus or Minus Two). 1993. 1962. 1989. New information assimilated to existing images. The old woman is seen in profile looking left. The young woman is also looking left, but most facial features are not visible. Cages of the Mind. Secure control of the skies. We simplify our mental model of the world and then work within this model. (GTMO in the 50's. "It's very safe here." Cheney wearing Atta's face). Avoid pitfalls and ruts. Define a set. Her eyelash, her nose. The curve of her cheek.

2.

The crucial numbers are staggered in black and white boxes. 48.4, 12.3, 27.0. Can we overcome these biases? (Imaginations, signatures.) The Vietnamese/ Cambodian aircraft example. The American Embassy in Cairo. "I knew it all along!" (You don't even need a face.) Rate the chances: *Almost certainly. Highly Likely. Probably.* (33.0, 9.3, 11.1) This evidence has been totally discredited. This evidence has been, is being, was. (Fumbled lyrics, old ads, clichés: intel by another name.) Rate: *Probable. We Believe. Better than Even. About Even.* This illustration shows a flag, a rectangle with an X from corner to corner, acquiring variables and dimensions until it becomes akin to sacred geometry. (We rotate the image in mind, vulnerable as we are to deception and manipulation.) A slam dunk! A fly in the ointment. Bird strangled and still singing in the hand. *Highly Unlikely. Almost No Chance. We Doubt.*

3.

Enemy combatant. Civilian. Child. A severe limitation on the capacity of short-term memory. “Sir, when we’re through, they’ll have flies walking across their eyeballs.” (Black site as studio. Unconscious constraint. Only in the mind.) See: President Nixon’s trips to Peking and Moscow in 1972. The British and the Gurkhas in India in 1814. “They didn’t just build hell on earth, they built a lab inside it.” (Can we overcome these biases?) Bird in the hand. “I knew it all along!” *It is much easier after the fact to sort the relevant from the irrelevant signals.* (Here, the power they imagine is produced on the body and recorded on video. Afterward, they erase it.) “If the report had told me the opposite, would I have believed it?” *We can now see what disaster it was signaling.* Cages of the mind. Secure control. Almost no chance. (Erase.)

## REALISM

Before it was used to imprison Haitian refugees and, later, alleged terrorists, the US Naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, hosted a simulation of idyllic, mid-century American life. In the blindspot of international law, officers and their families reconstructed America's fantasy of itself, replete with picket fences, well-mown lawns, picnic tables, and the nuclear families seen in the era's ads. "No one had to lock their doors." Questioned later, those who'd lived there said it had been the happiest time of their life.

In January of 2002, the children of those families may have watched the nightly news. They may have seen the makeshift camp, the parade of kidnapped men brought before the cameras. Razor wire, ocean roar. In orange jumpsuits—shackled, wearing goggles and headphones—they knelt behind chain-link fences. Many of them had simply been abducted and trafficked for the sake of bounties. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld stated that they chose Guantánamo to house the men because it was "the least worst place." As of 2022, thirty-five men still remain.

As a visitor there, you can have McDonald's. In the base's gift shop, there is no picture taking, but you can purchase stickers and keychains like any tourist. You can buy a T-shirt showing a Minion with the base's name on the front. You don't need to think about it. Just sign the check, keep moving. Later, at home, you reread the new age slogan on the souvenir mug, saying, *Guantánamo Bay, Be Here Now*—and it sounds just like a command.

# THE ANGEL OF GOVERNMENT

In a secure basement in DC, Cheney  
takes call after call, channeling terror

into a dark clot in his left ventricle  
from which Camp Echo will be born.

“I still believe that we were right.  
No, I would do nothing differently.”

A regime of images, of bureaucratic desire.  
A word that makes the worst thing real.

\*

The deranged angel’s wing, its larynx  
like a chunk of silicon, coursing

with police. “The beginning of terror,” or,  
“Turns out I’m really good at killing people.”

There is no coming back from this.  
There is nothing but power watching

as psyche decays into history, into a mind  
like a terminal, a monitor atop a desk

\*

in the Pentagon, in a hospital, a black site.  
Picture: you plug your heart into a projector

and its screen darkens over with all  
your words’ forms. What do you really say?

What does dreaming in an empire become?  
At midday, a man films a young Afghan

standing amid the rubble: “Americans?  
The Americans will say anything.”

## IN A TIME OF ERROR

In a letter, bin Laden writes,  
“Brothers, if you have any books  
on the science of classical prosody,  
please send them to me.” A mistress  
claims his true muse was the singer

Whitney Houston, dead of overdose.  
“They hosed the streets as blood still ran  
like streams crashing down from the clouds.”  
In other words: “The only war  
is the war on the imagination.”

\*

Each day, one reads the feed.  
One hears the voice the thrush: “O  
fret not after knowledge. I have none.”  
(They watch as the patient lets go.)  
Driven insane by Layla’s beauty,

Majnoun wanders in a daze, sleepless,  
singing praises to his dead love.  
Lonely ISIS wives tweet poems  
for masked husbands riding in Jeeps.  
At her grave, he dissolves to dust.

\*

2001. Bin Laden’s poem:  
“To create a show of terror  
more spectacular than anything  
the world had ever witnessed.”  
*O love, O image, buried in the heart.*

To desire it. To crave knowledge  
of its face, the beauty of its spectacle.  
It is written in neuron, satellite,  
weaponry. In rubble, an ash of faces.  
In nightmare, one finds a Muse.



\*

Bureaucrat. Warlord. Petroleum  
billionaire. All believe in, all adore  
the war on the imagination, the war  
all wars are. (Operation Centaur Strike.  
Operation Bright Star.) “The unknown

known, the known unknown.”

(Haven Denial, Vacant City.)

“I love death, sir. I do.”

The mind shivers with the news.

“We must endure our thoughts all night.”



# INTERROGATION DAYS

1.

*Bâtîl*: the false. At Abu Ghraib,  
those prisoners our soldiers posed

and photographed with bound hands  
touching one another's genitals

believed their image destroyed—  
a false light tattooed in. This

\*

is how Intelligence works.  
“When you know everything

about someone, you can do anything  
to them.” Agents rereading

*The Arab Mind* studied what a people  
hates. The job: to give them that.

\*

“It’s evil, but it’s also stupid.”  
Two doctors paid by the CIA

knew enough of the soul’s needs  
to reverse engineer its collapse.

The secret: sleep. Soul demands it—  
it can’t take much before needing

\*

to go back under for a time, blind.  
*My thoughts are all a case of knives.*

Here, theory talks of neurons  
mirroring one another across

the cleft. I amplify your face,  
eyes, what I see you do. The you

\*

you become inside my mind—  
or the not-you in me seeing

the not-me in you. Love,  
tied to the dead room's chair.

“No one asks one's torturer,  
‘Are you me?’” Mirroring,

\*

interrogators repeat all:  
*I was in Mosul. / You were*

*in Mosul. Why? / To meet a friend. /*  
*To meet a friend. Why?*

Slang renames the questioner  
Echo. *Sweet Queen of parley,*

\*

*Daughter of the Sphere.* Here  
my voice, spoken so you can hear,

both joins and breaks us apart.  
*Barzakh:* barrier, isthmus;

what stands between the sweet water  
and the salty; for Ibn Arabi,

\*

what unites two things divided.  
Between-world. Horizon line.

To an audience of budding officers,  
*The Psychology of Intelligence Analysis*

insists: “Beware mirror-images.  
Beware coincidence.”

2.

How Intelligence wanted it:  
each chained to their cell door,

naked, with no ventilation.  
*Do not hesitate to use the dogs.*

In Wisdom's testimony: "I saw  
two naked detainees, one

\*

masturbating to another kneeling  
with its [sic] mouth open."

One stored it all on a hard drive.  
"There is no code, sir, no secret.

What you understand is all I meant."  
We're just setting the record straight.

\*

To record is to know by heart:  
*re-cordare*, as in cardiac, cordial.

"One guard punched a detainee  
square in the chest, nearly

sending him into cardiac arrest."  
According to Ibn Arabi, Wisdom

\*

belongs to the *himma*, energy  
of imagination, seated in the heart.

With toothpicks, Muslim detainees  
scrawled verses into white

Styrofoam cups. They watched  
as a copy of the Quran was taken

\*

and strung up with a used bra.  
"You don't really believe in

this shit, do you?" Camp Echo,  
Camp X-Ray, Camp Justice,

Camp No. In a stress position,  
tied up so he could not rest

\*

and made to hear at full volume  
"Fuck Your God," by Deicide,

he feels the heart give birth  
to raw, screaming thought-forms

flooding into imaginal space.  
Ego Up. Ego Down. Love

\*

of comrades. Hate of Comrades.  
We Know All. Futility.

"We're fucked!" is all they said.  
(Compelled to pray in a small

windowless cell, one can't tell  
which direction is Mecca.)

3.

In Attar's epic, the pilgrim birds  
pledge obedience to the *hoopoe*,

a dream-bird, who guides them  
through arduous valleys on the way

to the *Simurgh*, King of the Birds.  
After several days awake, subjects

\*

begin to lose cognitive abilities.  
Reading is more difficult. Speech

becomes unfocused and erratic.  
In the Valley of Detachment, one

discovers "the oneness of diversity,  
not oneness locked in singularity."

\*

In a stress position, still sleepless,  
one detainee began to talk. Valley

of the Quest. Valley of Love. Valley  
of Mystery. Hallucinating dogs,

he watched them devour his family  
and reported this to his interrogators.

\*

Q: What is your greatest curiosity?  
What would you like to know

more than anything in the world?  
A: What my punishment will be.

Entering the Valley of Bewilderment,  
the birds lose all certainty: "I doubt

\*

my doubt. Doubt itself is unsure.  
But who is it for whom I sigh?"

*O image treasured in the heart.*  
After another bypass operation,

Dick Cheney returned to work.  
In defiance of his intel officers

\*

he insisted on viewing raw, un-  
analyzed transcripts of chatter,

intercepted calls, boasts and lies,  
sleep-deprived confessions from

Persons Under Control. “We’ve  
got to spend some time in the shadows

\*

of the intelligence world.” At last,  
the pilgrims discover the *Simurgh*,

the King of Birds. But it is only  
they themselves: “I am the mirror set

before your eyes. Within my light,  
you see yourself, your own reality.”

\*

“Misfiled paperwork, inattentive  
government employees, mis-

understandings and miscommunications—  
just commonplace incompetence.”

They believed, unlike before,  
this war would be invisible.





book II



# DYSNOMIA

*An asteroid is a world's remains:  
a shrapnel of goddesses, fates, furies.*

1.

Reversal inside each voice, eating ~~ym~~ my ages, these flies,  
those towers, signs / says: Star Chamber, says: signal flickering  
in meninges, eyes inside a plastic bag, a famous cell, this

scarecrow wandering a room of fucked ~~Earth~~ Earths / said:  
Demeter in wet cement, a face in rust / drones dusting crops  
w/pregnancy, w/pills / “~~Yto~~ you have cheapened the importance

of the very ~~ugly~~ ugly word [REDACTED]” / asteroid 399  
Persephone, holes in the cortex / (fear death by camera, by  
microplastics, quasars, bleach) / said: *disaster* comes from stars

2.

The procedure ~~you~~ you describe is not the real procedure / *now*  
*read that back* / (rag in mouth, foam in lungs) / my ~~mares'~~ master's car  
destroyed in [REDACTED] / Detention Site Green / "They said we were

pussies, that we had lost our spine" / see: God of Death is God of Wealth,  
see: *If it is true that we must do this, / we must slit our throats*, etc. / "Yes,  
it's regrettable that one guy died" / calling Clean Teams (Lachesis, Atë,

Atropo) / a soul like a lightswitch / this is Haven Denial, this is  
a Person Under Control, an effect of the Moon's ~~errsew~~ erratic  
orbit / parallax, acetone, etc. / Their blindspot is ~~ye~~ by design

3.

Masking, unmasking / see: Saturn's remains, see: *lex talionis*, arteries  
~~teid~~ tied to black metal chair (a broken vent, a halo of dead pixels  
trapped in the mirror, in radical ~~gyre~~ grey nowhere, in stock photo

zodiac) / this alt-god running mazes on diazepam, alprazolam, ash  
of neurons / said: [REDACTED], said: "You dare to invoke  
the Fathers in your pursuit of nullification," etc. / *O Erinyes*,

*that under earth take vengeance on men, on all who swear a false oath*  
(sucking his own cock, etc.) / metastasis, Analytica / "I told the camera  
I was not there, but I was, I always was, and now [REDACTED]"

4.

Have eaten [REDACTED], felt axial tilt / each sentence a stripped wire,  
a surrogate, at apogee / trashbag of the Wrong God, sticking a mic  
in a doll's head, etc. / see: the last ambulance, its siren, this torn grey

*barzakh* (Nazi chatrooms, this site not shown on any map) / said:  
“A terrible Thing. Read the Transcripts” / cue Eris, *hamartia* [inaudible],  
cue 25143 Itokawa [lifts microphone] / (You are not aware of it

but you can ~~feel~~ feel it happening to you) / see: “I want nothing,”  
asteroid 465, “I want ~~nothing~~ nothing,” wreath of gutted reptiles,  
orchids, locusts, old cassettes / see: Hell means nothing stops

5.

Nerve end cut out by Law / [REDACTED] in trash stratum, ~~psyche~~ psyche  
as compost, as spasm / discards moaning, busted guts, objects  
in protected air-space (blockchain/synapse) / said: mother planet

gone, resisting / said: weapons supplied to Space Force / “here” “on  
screen” “I” read the diagnosis / “A terrible thing you are ~~doing~~ doing,  
but you will have to live with it, ~~no~~ not I” / (cell dracfting fuct

copies cpoiesz) / said: enter redemption codes, ask permission, [in-  
audible, laughter], (all the ~~gods~~ gods turned informants) / see: Idols  
& Judges, all Americans, see: the anthem on repeat / “Not I”



6.

Astrolabe built from a trashcan, the [REDACTED] / “I will cut your son’s throat,” said the doctor, 4581 Asclepius, detainee in Life Skills class / now read that ~~bke~~ back (opening the Shadow app)/ “I was


deprived of sleep as a matter of [inaudible]” / see: fascist cartoonist, see: 16 Psyche, 66391 Moshup / turning shifts in the Fulfillment Center / “it is a child’s wires I hold” (*puer aeternus*, senile adolescent) / KSM

wearing my mother’s face, dreaming of police propaganda, of an Eye turned wrong to the light/ [deny, extract, delete] / “Tell [blank] to do the right thing. This is the final word [REDACTED],”

7.

(Can't photograph) / ~~nois~~ noises in temporal lobe, forged papers / says:  
"the suspect charmed us," etc. / sketches of short-shackling, a hairy arm/  
*Now bomb the Goddess again* / said: "I brought him as many good things

as bad" / fentanyl, abstraction, cumulonimbus / "open" sign taped to  
a detainee's cell / *And I began to feel I was an artwork* / (low battery,  
no Sun or Star, the last ad flickering on) / *And so knew I had died* / see:

 / (ghost weeping at the sight of an old shoe) / waterboarded  
183 times / (an old crayon box) / "fucking idiots took it literal, now  
look at us" / [laughter, shuffling papers] / *No, he did not complain*

8.

*O holy Eye folded in light* / a sparrow, a prayer for the heaven of Melek  
Taus / each love a crux, a skull ~~epu~~ cup full of intel / (Part of Fortune,  
Part of Fate) / weather of pheromones, of hedge funds, a mannikin

channeling all of it ALL / see: scimitar on screen, see: Caliphate  
Customer Service, a pearl before the world / a ~~moth~~ mouth a tongue  
defiles (alchemic shit, facial crypt) / claims his father “worked in AI,”

claims the mind of Erik Prince / see: beloved by Black Iron Prison,  
by Phonoï, Neikea, Pseudologoi, / [confess here to Diseases, Eyes,  
to Losing Everyone] / [crosstalk, tape stopped] / daughter of Strife, etc.

9.

~~Muticle~~ Music of Spheres, felt click (too late, too ~~late~~) / malebolge,  
extruded petrochemical sludge, patina of newsprint, scried bone / said  
(into socket): “We believe in the Asteroid because it ~~hyster~~ hates us” /

calling Bennu, calling Europa, Nemesis [fax noise, droning] / *Well,*  
*the fuckup was you wanted a dad* / [microphone diaphragm,  
slick viscera] / (new zodiac shows The Tourniquet, the Cancelled

Pupil, Orphaned Sea) / see: Catch and Kill, see: running with Furies,  
Pallas, Interamnia / “I have you all in a file cabinet,” etc. / failures  
mined for ████████, audited for Fray, made Subject to Report

10.

Hunting the Witch, the Dilated Hour / see: Putin's liver, see:  
meridian path scorched, [REDACTED] (alt-cosmos cresting, receding,  
castrated avatar, [REDACTED] ) / sing the words back:

arachnid tapestry, nimbus of ~~arbsions~~ abrasions / [inaudible] "I think  
I would love just to see them all killed" / *vomiting images in the place*  
*of the Law* / Hoax Code erased, RNA trashed / said: "Look,

he was our guy *everywhere*. He got dirt, they got laid. This is what I mean  
by [indecipherable]" / see: dreamlife ZERO, evacuation proceeds /see:  
(fucked caduceus, oxidized eye) / glaciers like little slasher films

11.

Executive persona, asphyxia with polyethylene bag / see: cancer  
cooked out of fossils, out of skies / see: Fortuna, Iris, Aurora /  
(Theory of Social Prosthesis) / “shameless lies and deceptions,

dating all the way back to [blank]”/ said: Fuck it, I’m only chemicals,  
extracted rebar, crosshairs, a system for exchanging souls / *Sir,*  
*I cannot use you anymore, I am not sorry* / [crosstalk] / a rose

blooming in grey light, tangled in genome, in Oedipus & clocks  
[throat caught, clawing] / see: ghost pilot, solar wind bursting  
the lawful heart, its toys / antennae of the wandering dead



book III





# CIVIL SOCIETY

*Summer 2017*

A black pick-up with a veteran's plates. Marine. Purple Heart. On his window an oval decal: "I Heart PAWGs."

Turn right. Summer is a traffic cone caved-in on the margin. As I pull up, masked workers in a halo of trash blow leaves across the lot. Between eclipses, in the Path of Totality, a Senator's cancer fills the screen.

I'm here to teach the language.

"The guy's an outright fucking fraud. A miserable bull-shitting ass-clown," etc. The feed never stops. The Dragon's Mouth swallows the Sun and Moon, and the leaves trick shadows in the corners of our eyes. This one's essay is about catastrophe. That one: torture. Sex trafficking. Abolish police.

Each one here is in the same debt as I am. (The adjunct rate pays \$400 per course per month.)

Elsewhere, a medieval Islamic mystic is America's best-selling poet. Consume his wisdom in an airport, in an Uber, in a mall. *You are the universe in ecstatic motion*, etc. Elsewhere, Steve Bannon reads Vico. (Ricorso, barzakh, interregnum.) The president stares into the sun.

Coeur de Lion. Bright field of energy. A clock pumping in the chest. "I mean, just fucking look at this! You can't believe any of his bullshit!" etc. I read six pages on the surveillance state, five on confederate monuments. Nothing connects. Then everything does.

Dysphoria. Hypoxia. Ataxic gait. / "Imagination and the heart as one."

The Moon giving birth. The dying Sun.

*Summer 2019*

Today, they're rounding up addicts. Crushing wheelchairs in a trash compactor. A supermassive black hole, a light that can't exist. The autopsy of the billionaire pedophile.

A Thursday in August. A tree shattered beneath the city's collapsed lines. "This is encouraging," one says. "This is a war of stuff against stuff."

Pictures of children with space blankets tangled in a cage. A CBP tower drips with vomit & shit of vultures. Read: "Asylum seeker slits throat." (Does not exist. No one knows a thing.)

Flies trapped in a medicine cabinet. It's right here on the screen. Terms of Service. Day of the Rope.

"Nothing you see is happening."

*Spring/Summer 2020*

Unemployed. Watching empire consume itself. Ring of Fire, Thunder Moon. FLOYD spray-painted on the city's wrecked spine. "The whole block looked like Baghdad," etc. Drone views, teargas. The naked grin of camouflaged white militia men.

Elsewhere, having seen too much of ventilated lungs, a young nurse goes home to end her life. A cop worth more than a healer. Death worth more than life. Sin Eaters flare out like vaporous tendrils in penumbral light. North Node, South Node—the ancient Dragon's Tail and Mouth.

Elsewhere, my friend loses her mind with grief. A billion animals dead in the Australian fires. I buy a gun, watch my cat get put to sleep. "Give me communism, another music, anything."

Darkness puts our minds on like a plastic bag. Then lockdown, curfew. Debtors watch the death count morph into an ad. (Bill Clinton on stage, describing the value of literature to our democracy.).

This body of remainders, of remains. These signals coursing through, untuned. A strange antenna, an old tattoo. The greenness of the heart, the moon.

These images trapped in our eyes.

Each day seventeen veterans take their own life. Each day four thousand Americans die coughing. They are calling Cuba a terrorist state. Plus Houthis and Iran. “The oldest playbook these assholes have. And it works!”

Stillfever neuropathic eye-scissor / “I” am telling “this.” Last Wednesday retired military participated in. Last Wednesday off duty police officers participated in. “You’re very special. And you’ve been mistreated. We love you.”

Let me tell you a story about a people. (The CIA signs off on the screenplay.) Let me tell you a story about a class of people. (An American poet waxing nostalgic for Stephen Foster.)

“I shook the executive’s hand and accepted the plaque.”

Ashmorning goldbluing the circuit, the clayartery. A syntax shared by planets, plastics, markets, leptons, aphids, whales, etc. An Army PSYOPS officer leading fascists to the capitol. An armored vehicle in the street.

“We were watching when it happened and he screamed and wouldn’t stop.” A leaked account. A Green Zone in the capital. A brick of heroin on a military plane, in the torso of a soldier’s corpse.

Brandon Bernard is murdered by the State. Another woman disappears at Fort Hood. Totality is in the texture, in the way things click and turn.

“It was right there and th

*September 11, 2021 & after*

Twenty years.

At GTMO, the McDonald's flag

flies at half-mast.

\*

Dead dreams on the tarmac. Tent encampments in the streets of Kabul.  
Eight trillion dollars, 929,000 dead. "How far is it to the mineral deposits?  
How far to the laboratory, the factory, the mall?"

"...OF THE SAME FOUL SPIRIT..." (Bush)

A day before the US withdraws, one of its drones kills seven children  
carrying bottles of water. A fresh shiver across the planet (deformed stars, a  
new and final word).

"There was not a strong enough case to be made for personal  
accountability." (Under the sirens,


tearing at one's skin.)

\*

Let me tell you a story about a people.

I'm here to teach the language.

Let me tell you: Jackpot. Haven Denial. Crushing wheelchairs in a trash  
compactor.

 recalls the childhood of an interrogator nicknamed "The  
Monster."

\*

It never ends.

Never ended.

Always it's Hellfire vs. the Un-children, the Un-persons, forever-wronged.  
Always, the always-story of the Un-resurrected, the Arrested.

And there is no singing. Or there always is. (No one who hears can say.)

Said: The Sun, listening for the Moon, also listens for the Lost. (One dreams it).

Said: It listens for shadows flickering in Forever's book, for the pages it writes about the Terror, about THE REASON FOR ALL THE BOMBS, about "Us" (a civil people, a nation of laws), seeking threats, seeking health forever.

"I told them all just to fuck off. There is nothing left."

One only dreamed it.

One saw it mumbling in a book—

in a war—

forever.





# book IV



## The Green Man

1.

If we didn't poison it, gouge it, cut it apart,  
greenness would bleed through everywhere.

Eating sunlight, the leaves and tendrils  
would cover sidewalks, parking lots, stoplights.

Everything confuses in that greenness,  
all we love and fear. Look too deeply

and wires spark, neurons char. You reach out  
for a heart inside it. Then you feel what hides.

2.

In the Europe of Crusaders, the Green Man  
was a god of vegetation. On churches & pubs,

he faded into surroundings. When you saw him,  
each detail began rhyme: what had been cut

burst forth, what was lost was everywhere.  
The Wild Man, Jack in the Green, Osiris

(whose green limbs lay scattered on the earth).  
The stone faces stare back. Everything is listening.

3.

In weeds, one looks for what hides.  
In Ohio, the corn field's green waves

whisper with poison. A childhood friend  
come home from Iraq. Tattoos everywhere:

cartoon bodies of stillborn infants circled

with syringes and razors; his own face torn apart--

every image is a wound, a dead dream.  
His soul reaches out of his skin, and seethes.

4.

Head split in half and glued back together,  
the Green Man sprouts vines, grasses, acanthus.

His skin shatters, flaring like a bright green sun.  
The world is dreamed up again each day

amid confusion, half-rhyme, coincidence.  
The Green Zone is an oasis in America's hell.

There are no answers. One's roots spread out  
through a soil of errors. The static begins to flower.

5.

How far past the edge will you allow it?  
As a boy, Al-Zarqawi dreamed only of war,

of Saladin driving the Lion Heart back.  
In prison, covered in tattoos, he was called

"The Green Man." The Quran changed him.  
The other inmates watched as he took a razor

and erased hell from his skin. A soul gone  
past ink, blood, images. Past anything that lives.

6.

The mind grows sick of guessing.  
In annihilation, it seeks a total clarity.

Imagination stares down at its small body

crumpled in a heap. About its chest, the chakra's

pulsing light grows dim. A strange hand  
reaches, removes the heart, and squeezes a drop

of thin, black liquid into a styrofoam cup.  
What can anybody do? The sirens have begun.

7.

A heart should go insane in such a place.  
One can't help falling in love with fractures,

with the shifting faces of the disaster.  
I talk about it like I'm no one. Imagine I am.

Imagine Khidr, the Green One, who aids the lost:  
an angel and guide, twin and stranger. He says,

"Your image is in eternity." He says, "First, there is  
no such thing as dream. Then, there is nothing else."

8.

It's late. The battle is already everywhere.  
You can see billions of years of green life

compressed into a market for black fuel.  
In that mirror, futures shatter. We poison it

until even the glitches rhyme. We can't help  
dreaming the days just to get lost inside them,

to fade into the scenery. All that we love and fear.  
The dreadful tapestry, the bright green sun.

# From the Imperial Core

(Oct. - Dec. 2023)

*for the martyrs*

1.

In October, George W. Bush throws the first pitch at the World Series. 2001 again, in parallax. Biden says this is not 9/11: it is “equivalent to fifteen.”<sup>1</sup> He says this without shame. On screen, US senators speak of terrorism, the right to defend (see: saccharine, genocidal memes; sociopathic hand on heart). “If Israel did not exist,” said Biden, “the United States would have to invent it.” Military contracts wadded up and shoved into a chest cavity. Scarecrow viscera, blood like sand and gravel. “A vengeful and cruel IDF is needed here. Anything less is immoral.”<sup>2</sup> (The CEO of Raytheon is George J. Hayes.) In Matcal Tower, rocket coordinates spill from the monitors. Somewhere, the children sleep and dream.

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<sup>1</sup> Biden based this number on relative population and number of victims. Gaza’s death count was soon to eclipse it by several orders of magnitude.

<sup>2</sup> This comes from a FB post made by Galit Distel Atbaryan, former public diplomacy minister of Israel. A larger excerpt: “Erase Gaza from the face of the earth. The Gaza monsters will flee to the southern fence to enter Egyptian territory or they will die. And their death is evil. Gaza should be erased. And fire and smoke on the heads of the Nazis in Judea and Samaria...A vengeful and cruel IDF is needed here. Anything less is immoral.”

2.

In DC, two weeks before the bombing starts: Secretary Blinken and his band perform “Hoochie-Coochie Man.”<sup>3</sup> He says we can “minimize death.” (Trails of white phosphorus in Gaza, in the West Bank, in Lebanon.) He says: we can bomb them while we save their lives. *You know I’m here / Everybody knows I’m here!*. Anyone can see. Her face streaming live from the shelters, a blue tarpaulin tent, a campfire glowing in rubble (the skies hang like a razor). They erase the stars, the grasses, her face. See: a video of incubators filled with nothing but blurry pixels. (The CEO of Northrup-Grummond is Kathy J. Hayes.) No one remembers anything that happens. Then it’s happening again.

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<sup>3</sup> You can find the full story in a *NY Times* article published less than a week before October 7, 2023, titled, “When Mr. Secretary Loves to Rock” (byline Michael Crowley, Oct. 2, 2023).

3.

Every accusation is in the mirror<sup>4</sup>. First slaughter, then vomit, the veil of lies. “We cannot confirm it officially, but you can assume it happened.”<sup>5</sup> See: a baby bottle, a calendar, a curtain pinned up against the wall. (Language just a bruise in the air, a cardboard cut-out trampled in the alley.) Using AI, Israel accelerates “target production.” They call it the Gospel.<sup>6</sup> They call it “civil pressure” when bombing a hospital, a school, a residential highrise. They call them “power targets” (eyes become archives, broken fire escapes.) “The most moral military in the world” annihilates anyone, anytime they want. For the lost, rocks and stones hold memories. They bear witness, lying among the grasses, cradling footprints, vanished ribbons, truth. “We’ll be back,” the dead boys say, smiling in another life.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> “Accusation in the Mirror” is a known rhetorical strategy used by nations who commit genocide. The basic strategy is to accuse the victim of that which you are doing or intend to do. My thanks to poet Wendy Trevino for introducing me to this concept on Twitter.

<sup>5</sup> Not a verbatim quote, but a paraphrase of the fundamental sentiment of many Israeli representatives.

<sup>6</sup> For info on the terminology of the IDF, and their use of AI, “‘A mass assassination factory’: inside Israel’s calculated bombing of Gaza,” by Yuval Abraham in *+972 Magazine* (Nov. 20, 2023)

<sup>7</sup> This is from a widely shared meme showing three smiling Palestinian boys who were later killed by Israel. It included the caption, “We’ll be back.” I cannot track down an original source, but it has stayed with me in memory.



4.

The US President says his love of Israel begins in the gut.<sup>8</sup> (An electromagnetic field circling the body like a torus.) It proceeds through his heart, into his head. Fourteen billion in military aid. Love, in waves and bursts. In Langley, in DC. In grey monotony of rubble, then pieces of a face. The feed comes straight from hell: "Burning their mother . . . You won't believe the video we got!"<sup>9</sup> (The bullet dipped in pork fat, the soul believed vaporized.) Then another vote, another veto. The Zionist at the UN wearing a yellow star. The IDF soldier posting a marriage proposal on Instagram, a missile signed for Chandler Bing. Reels of humiliation, memes of torture. Love, a polyp in the intestine. (The CEO of Lockheed-Martin is James Taiclet.) "WE DID WHAT WE COULD. REMEMBER US."<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> This remark was made March 11, 2010, while Biden was Vice President. The full passage from his longer remarks reads, "It generated a feeling for Israel that began in my gut and went to my heart, and the older I got matured in my mind." This appears in "Remarks by Vice President Biden: The Enduring Partnership Between the United States and Israel," which is accessible on [obamawhitehouse.archives.gov](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov).

<sup>9</sup> This quote and the following come from an article in *Haaretz* about the IDF's Influencing Department's Telegram channel which provides images of killing and torturing Palestinians. "Graphic Videos and Incitement: How the IDF Is Misleading Israelis on Telegram," by Yaniv Kubovich. Dec. 12, 2023.

<sup>10</sup> "Whoever stays until the end will tell the story. We did what we could. remember us." This message was written on a hospital's dry-erase board by Dr. Mahmoud Abu Nujaila on Oct. 20, and the image was posted by Doctors Without Borders on Instagram. The dry-erase board was later pictured damaged and lying amid rubble in Al Awda Hospital where Abu Nujaila and many others were killed in an Israeli strike on Nov. 21 (source: Doctors Without Borders post on Instagram, Dec. 6).

5.

The “Humanitarian Pause” arrives for Thanksgiving. On Black Friday, they’ve lined up for discounts, savings, prices slashed. Nothing survives the American mind. At 17,000 Palestinians killed (an undercount), Matthew Miller says, *Too early to assess*. As in: The clock is endless, the dial broken. Last summer, Americans watched *Oppenheimer* on IMAX, dreaming death as the ultimate product. Ribbons, footprints, blood like gravel. (The CEO of General Dynamics is Phebe Novakovic.) In Masafer Yatta, as the drone speaks, it hovers over parent and child: “If anyone thinks to do anything, we will find them and, if necessary, we will kill them.”<sup>11</sup> Voice of vomit, lead, asphyxiation. “We are working tirelessly to end this.” Beneath the stars, the sky, a single stone. And then another life.

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<sup>11</sup> See “Israeli Drones issue chilling threats to Masafer Yatta Families: Residents warned of making any move,” in *Middle East Monitor*, Dec. 4, 2023

## FUTURES

In the new cities, nightmare is the policy.  
Eyes become a prism in which dreams deform.  
All day long, we puncture. We eat the black, magnetic paste  
dripping from shattered bakeries. In the unglued streets,  
we cite each stumble, each curse and flare, studying  
windows sutured to the throat. A row of chalky vertebrae,  
a line of dead cars with antennae to breed and sing,  
sucking the ore from little tongues. They are in the sky.  
They are in the city of Cortisol, of Phosphorus, of Force.  
They're in the city of Gouged Out Sun, of Needles  
Pleading in the Dust. In the city of Human Corridors,  
a boy sleeps in a small nightmare hide-out. Beside him,  
in a miasma of glitching, cathode aura, a president  
pries himself apart to show what remains of his face.  
Distress signals oozing, sirens trapped screaming behind  
cardboard ribs, collapsed larynx, a tiny spastic heart.  
The battery dies. In the city square, we swallow ID cards.  
We wear a wire & repeat our lines: *Nobody, nobody, none.*  
We watch the Trash Diviner, the Streaming Child. We touch  
the Stitching, the Little Shards, the Future Routes  
shiny with grief and error. The ending does not stop—  
we find a home inside it. We lay a sheet and pallet down,  
telling stories under the stars whose death no one believes.  
And still, something awakens every day. It still knows itself,  
dreaming what the city undreams. It names each hour and shadow,  
peeling the layers back, searching every sign as it slips, every  
word that blurs. And it stays in us, *for* us—counting each stone,  
each broken key—reading the blue entrails of the ghost.



## READING NOTES & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

At times throughout the book, phrases appear in quotes or italics despite having no source. The sources for other passages got confused or lost. For those passages that have actual, traceable sources, you can find info below.

### ABOUT BOOK I

“Drone” first appeared in *West Branch* (Nov. 2019). My thanks to editor G.C. Waldrep.

“Interrogation Days” first appeared as an online feature in *Protean’s* “Against the Forever War” series (Feb. 2020). My thanks to editor Dominick J. Knowles for their support and comradeship.

“Death Prime” draws on the work of Ernest Becker and Terror Management Theory (as elaborated by Jeff Greenberg, Tom Pyszczynski, and Sheldon Solomon). The experiments described are discussed at length in the documentary on Becker and TMT, *Flight from Death*. Additionally, direct quotes are taken from Barack Obama’s memoir, *A Promised Land*; Michael Cohen’s abusive voicemails to a woman journalist; and from Donald Trump’s full-page ad in the wake of the Central Park Five case.

“Parallax” is a collage of fragmentary passages, images, and impressions taken from *The Psychology of Intelligence Analysis*, by Richard Heuer, published by the CIA. Outside/original material is incorporated freely but sparingly.

“Realism” draws on Jonathan M. Hansen’s *Guantánamo* and the reporting of Carol Rosenberg.

“The Angel of Government” draws on the title of Earth’s 1991 album, *Bureaucratic Desire for Revenge*. It also quotes the *Duino Elegies* of Rainer Maria Rilke (trans. Edward Snow) and a comment that Obama reportedly made to an aid about “killing people.” References and allusions to Dick Cheney are sourced from Jane Mayer’s *The Dark Side*.

“In a Time of Error” contains quotes from Osama bin Laden, Diane Di Prima (“the war waged on the imagination”), John Keats (“Fret not after knowledge”), and Wallace Stevens (“We must endure our thoughts all night.”). It also quotes from the poetry of Ahlam al-Nasr, “Poetess of the Islamic State,” as described in the *New Yorker* article, “Battle Lines” (June 1, 2015), by Robyn Creswell and Bernard Hayke (the image of streets of blood).

“Interrogation Days” has many sources. The poem contains direct quotes from Ed Snowden (“when you know everything about somebody you can do anything to them”), George Herbert (“My thoughts are all a case of knives”), George Tenet (“We’re fucked”), Mahmoud Darwish (tr.

Fady Joudah) (“No one asks one’s torturer, ‘Are you me?’”), Donald Rumsfeld, John Milton (“Echo, Sweet Queen of Parley...” comes from *Comus*), and Mohamedou Ould Slahi.

I am indebted to Reza Aslan's *No god but God* for pointing me to Farid ad-Din Attar's *The Conference of the Birds* (trans. Afkham Darbandi and Dick Davis). This is where we get the story of the Simurgh and the pilgrims that structures section three of "Interrogation Days," the title poem.

Gregg Miller's *The Interrogators* provided the code names used by interrogators for different strategies: Ego Up, Ego Down, Love of Comrades, Hatred of Comrades, We Know All, Futility, etc. These name different tactics for manipulating detainees and extracting information.

Additional material was sourced from Richard J. Heuer's *The Psychology of Intelligence Analysis*; William Chittick's *Ibn' Arabi: Heir to the Prophets*; Jane Mayer's *The Dark Side*; Seymour Hersh's *Chain of Command*; Jonathan M. Hansen's *Guantánamo*; James Hillman's *The Thought of the Heart and the Soul of the World*; *The Senate Intelligence Committee Report on Torture*; Gordon and Trainor's *Endgame*; *The Penguin Book of Hell*; and Chris Mackey and Also of use to me in this poem were the documentaries *No End in Sight* and *Taxi to the Dark Side*.

## ABOUT BOOK II

A note on reading *Dysnomia*: do not to speak the crossed-out typos aloud; just let the eye register them. For the redacted or blacked-out text, simply pause for a beat or two. The lines should be read fluently, not dwelling on breaks and glitches (of which there are many).

*Dysnomia* is a collage of psychic fragments circulating in late-2019/early-2020. Some references are objectively connected to that period, while others found their way into the poem through loose association. "Dysnomia," the name itself, has a variety of references: the ancient Greek goddess of lawlessness; a moon of the dwarf planet Eris (goddess of strife); and a kind of aphasia. This fusion of law(lessness), strife, and damaged speech was essential to the poem's conception. The visceral undercurrent of the poem has to do with the threat of asteroid collision with planet Earth, and the destructive and retributive powers that one can imagine in this—even a mistaken desire for this. It's fundamentally a poem about the Furies, some of whose names appear in the poem.

Throughout, I've quoted from the letter Donald Trump wrote to Nancy Pelosi in December 2019 during his first impeachment trial—a document at once comical and full of sadistic, oedipal fury. Additionally, I draw on the testimony of Dr. James Mitchell, the psychologist hired by the CIA (along with Bruce Jessen) to develop quasi-legal "enhanced techniques" for interrogation (i.e. torture). In January of 2020, Mitchell took the stand at Guantánamo, sharing the courtroom with the man he personally waterboarded, Khalid Shaikh Mohammad, and some quotes appear here. Also coloring the poem's atmosphere in its time of composition were the continual revelations about the death of Jeffrey Epstein and the extent of his influence and impunity. If you look for him, here, you can find him. All three figures—Trump, Mitchell, and Epstein—are woven throughout the poems alongside various other allusions and quotations (some direct, others heavily altered or even invented).

### ABOUT BOOK III

An earlier, shorter version of *Civil Society* appeared in *Prolit* in Summer 2021. Thanks to editor Patrick Blagrave for believing in the work.

The first section of the poem quotes from Coleman Barks' extraordinarily popular (and notably bad) translation of Rumi.

The final section quotes Defense Department spokesperson John Kirby's assessment of the August 29, 2021, airstrike mentioned in the poem.

Most of the other material in quotation marks is original to the poem. In a few cases, however, the sources have been lost.

### ABOUT BOOK IV

"The Green Man" and "Futures" appeared on my blog, *Out of Its Wooden Brain*, in fall of 2023.

You can find information online about the folk lore and mythological background of the Green Man. My main source for Khidr is the scholar Henry Corbin, who has written a lot on the mystical aspects of Islam.

Al-Zarqawi was a member of Al-Qaeda and founded the group that became ISIS. This anecdote about the tattoos and his nickname, "the Green Man," has been attested in a few sources, most prominently *PBS Frontline*.

During the invasion of Iraq, the US took over Saddam's palaces and central HQ. This heavily guarded and fortified area of Baghdad was known as "The Green Zone." It became an image of how badly out-of-touch the US leaders were, sealed safely away in air-conditioned offices, in a simulation of the US itself, while civilians and soldiers on the ground experienced unspeakable violence and horror.

The image of black liquid being squeezed from the heart alludes to a story about the youth of the Prophet Muhammad. My source for it is *Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources*, by Martin Lings.

The anecdote about my childhood friend's tattoos is true.

Unlike other poems here, "Among the Shards" has footnotes on the same page. Despite my dislike of the visual clutter, it seemed imperative to get the documentation right and to combat weaponized amnesia and distortion during an active genocide. The onslaught of lies from Zionists and imperialists was and is unlike anything I'd seen in my life, so leaving any doubt about veracity or sources in the poem seemed inappropriate.

The poem is documentarian, but it is also in the elegiac mode. It is a poem of grief and horror—a poem for the martyrs. But one thing should be made clear: what hope there is belongs to the resistance in all its forms. The US empire and its Zionist client state stand for death and destruction against all that is loving, true, and free. May we live to see their fall, and may all living things—even the inanimate, even the dead—be set free from domination.



RM Haines runs Dead Mall Press. He has also released the books *A Dark Address* (pdf in 2020; print in 2024), *Three Essays: for a poetics of psycho-materialism* (DMP 2022), and *Poem at the Going Rate* (DMP 2023). He publishes his poems and essays on his blog, *Out of Its Wooden Brain* ([woodenbrain.substack.com](http://woodenbrain.substack.com)).